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President: The Hon. Julian R. Hunte ..... (Saint Lucia)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 39 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/254)

Note by the Secretary-General on proposed revisions to programme 8 of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005: United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/58/83)

Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/58/16, chapter III, section B, programme 8; chapter IV, section B)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/352)

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would like to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the subject of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support. As you know, my group, the Group of 77, has supported from the beginning and still energetically supports the NEPAD initiative. This is because, first of all, the countries of NEPAD are members of our group and also because, for the first time, there is a coherent and completely integrated plan for the development of the entire African continent. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the progress made in the implementation of this initiative and on the support given to it by the international community.

The Group of 77 and China is very pleased to see this debate covering the issues that relate primarily to Africa's development. NEPAD is a comprehensive programme for the socio-economic and political development of the continent, and that is why we should also deal with it in a comprehensive way. This programme is the departure point for the integrated development of the African continent.

But, of course, beyond the planning of the programme, there is the political will that each and every African country, all of us on the African continent, must have — the will to translate into reality the strategies that were adopted at a national level and that are taking place within the context of this integrated programme for the African continent. Therefore, each African Government will be called upon to mobilize all its national capacities for the realization of NEPAD objectives.

With the report of the Secretary-General, we have today an idea of all the measures taken by each African

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country and the institutional mechanisms set up at the regional level.

The establishment of what is now called the African Peer Review Mechanism — the mechanism for monitoring, assessment and reciprocal apprenticeship — constitutes a significant step made by our African countries for assessing the political and economic performances of the continent. That mechanism reflects the determination of all African countries to take charge of their own development. It will enable us to master the process of implementation and to achieve the objectives of NEPAD. As we have seen in the report, four countries will start these assessments by the end of this year.

Concurrently with the development efforts of the programme, good governance, as it is called today, should accompany the programme. Efforts have been made all over the continent to consolidate democracy and strengthen conflict prevention, settlement and management. Efforts have also been made to establish a pan-African parliament and to set up national focal points for NEPAD, and there are initiatives in each subregion of Africa to begin and encourage plans for infrastructures, health, education and agriculture — in other words, some of the most fundamental sectors.

We share the view of Kofi Annan that all this cannot be done without additional resources coming from outside the African continent. The mobilization of national resources by each countries on the continent is not sufficient. That is why this debate today is so important, because it must inspire the international community to mobilize even more resources for NEPAD.

In 2002, a declaration was adopted by which the Member States committed themselves to provide the help and the support necessary for NEPAD, and we hope that that declaration will be followed up. The developed countries should help Africa to respect and implement the commitments that have been undertaken in various United Nations conferences and summits since the Millennium Declaration. Those commitments include, of course, official development assistance and the famous objective of 0.7 per cent of gross national product. Unfortunately, and we have to repeat this every time, there is the issue of external debt and, in an even more striking way today, in this world of globalization, the issue of opening up developed countries' markets to exports from poorer countries. There is also the promotion of investment in developing countries, in particular in African countries.

There has certainly been some increase, which remains very limited, in official development assistance for Africa. We hope that this increase will be continued so that we can attain the objectives set for official development assistance, which rose with difficulty from $16 billion in 2000 to $18 billion in 2002. The Group of 77 and China would like to take this opportunity to encourage all donor countries to continue their efforts to provide official development assistance to the poorest countries in Africa — obviously, the least developed countries continue to need it most — in order to promote the development of those countries and implementation of NEPAD.

As far as external debt is concerned, measures have been undertaken with the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. But we are still far from meeting the expectations of heavily indebted developing countries. That is why we hope that the announced contributions to the Fund created for the heavily indebted poor countries will be forthcoming. Furthermore, there is the impact of the international economic environment, of the policies of developed countries and of financial policies on a number of the reforms undertaken by developing countries to benefit from the Initiative.

Because of those difficulties, many countries have been slow to move from the point of decision to the point of completion. Likewise, some countries that have reached the point of completion have seen a deterioration in their indebtedness indicators because of the decrease in export income, which I just mentioned, and the volatility in commodity prices. That is why the Group of 77 and China has consistently linked international trade problems, debt problems and development financing problems.

Other indebted African countries have been neglected and continue to suffer from the burden of debt. They are obliged to allocate important resources to reimbursing that debt, often to the detriment of investment in the social sector. That is why it might seem abnormal that those countries are obliged to reimburse their debts to rich countries — for which such sums represent an extremely small proportion of their resources — to the detriment of social investment, which is absolutely necessary for their stability.

Therefore, during today's debate, we call on developed countries to redouble their efforts, in the

context of international solidarity, to invest financial resources in Africa, particularly because today's subject is NEPAD. Moreover, as I just said, developed countries must give up their protectionist trade policies to enable developing countries to gain access to the markets and consequently increase their own resources. The effects of such protectionist measures on the efforts and plans of developing countries — particularly African countries — can be devastating, as revealed during the recent conference held in Cancún.

Here, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I should also like to highlight the commitments undertaken since the Millennium Declaration during the international conferences held at Monterrey, Doha and Johannesburg. This year, in the context of the United Nations, we tried to ensure integrated follow-up and implementation of those conferences. We hope that that effort will be continued so that we can achieve the results envisaged for the 2005 summit.

In addition, I cannot fail to recall the failure of Cancún and the "cotton scandal", which showed to what an extent the positions of the richest countries may seem inconsistent with the multilateral trade system that they themselves have encouraged and supported. Indeed, at a time when rich countries are demanding increased and general trade liberalization of African countries — to the point of imposing it through multilateral institutions — those same countries show no sign of receptivity to the legitimate demands and urgent needs of African countries.

The role of the United Nations is certainly essential; it is important to mobilize international support for NEPAD. The creation of the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa — headed by my friend Ambassador Gambari — to which we contributed much last year in the framework of reform, is a source of satisfaction for us. We are also pleased to know that, in this year's budget, the necessary resources will finally be allocated to that Office, which will help to support NEPAD.

For the first time, we in the United Nations Secretariat we will have a focal point that will follow all African affairs on an equal basis. That being acknowledged, financial resources exist, and we fervently hope that they will help African countries and NEPAD.

Finally, I take this opportunity to recall that United Nations reports predict that certain of the world's regions will be in a position to attain the Millennium Development Goals. The unfortunate exception is the African region, for the simple reason that current growth rates remain too weak to reduce poverty on the African continent. That is why, once again, the international community must meet the efforts of African countries halfway. Of course, more democracy and good governance are required of those countries.

The Group of 77 and China has often had the opportunity to say that security and peace are global concepts. They cannot be considered solely from the perspective of peacekeeping or of disarmament. Consequently, the struggle against poverty is an integral part of the action undertaken to safeguard international security. It is the preventive component of any action in favour of international peace and security.

In conclusion, Africa today has a mechanism at its disposal — an indigenous African initiative, NEPAD. It is up to us to support Africa's own efforts.

Mr. Jose (India): We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his first consolidated report on progress in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We would also like thank him for the report on the implementation of his recommendations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We have considered both reports with interest.

It has always been our conviction that Africa knows its own problems better than anybody. It also knows the solutions to the problems. We believe that Africa's understanding cannot be substituted by that of others. Its ownership and leadership of NEPAD is, for us, a sine qua non for the success of this framework.

Africa does, however, require support from outside for the solutions which it has identified. The international community promised this support, notably in the Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit. It has also, in the United Nations and in other forums, endorsed NEPAD as the framework for an African-owned and African-led programme for the social and economic development of the continent.

It is still early to assess progress in the implementation of NEPAD. It is, nevertheless, important to bear in mind that a principal conclusion contained in the report of the Panel of Eminent Personalities on the Independent Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of

Africa was that commitments made by the international community largely remained unfulfilled during the 1990s. Official development assistance for Africa had been expected to increase at an annual rate of 4 per cent during that period. Instead, it fell by 46 per cent between 1990 and 2000.

NEPAD is based on the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership. This time, solidarity needs to be real. A further failure to show solidarity would harm the credibility of the international community and be injurious to the notion of partnership.

One of the first opportunities to demonstrate solidarity was provided by Cancún. The result was disappointing. There seems to be an incipient realization now that, tactically, the developed world should have offered more, and that it should have done so earlier. From a strategic point of view, however, it should have proceeded, *ab initio*, on the basis of a spirit of partnership.

There are some signs of progress, albeit modest, with regard to official development assistance for Africa. We note that the figure increased from $16.4 billion in 2000 to $17.7 billion in 2001 and $18.6 billion in 2002. That trend needs to be built upon. It cannot, by itself, lead to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. A quantum increase is of primary importance as, given the situation with regard to trade and investment, there can be no substitute for official development assistance.

India's own relationship with Africa is built on strong historical and political foundations. We have been exploring ways in which we can provide support to NEPAD in the true spirit of South-South cooperation. Our Ministry of Commerce has launched a Focus Africa programme. This seeks to build on the growth of approximately 300 per cent which has been achieved in trade with sub-Saharan Africa in the past 10 years. We have also decided to increase the availability of credit for trade and other commercial exchanges. All bilateral debt with the countries covered by the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative has been cancelled. Africa is the principal focus of our technical and economic cooperation programme with developing countries. Our cooperation and solidarity with Africa is based on the firm belief that this partnership can be meaningful and mutually beneficial. While more remains to be accomplished, we are satisfied with the progress which is being made in sharing with Africa our experience of economic and social development.

We endorse the recommendations made by the Secretary-General and would particularly like to highlight those which pertain to Africa's development partners. The resources which have been pledged need to be disbursed quickly and without conditionalities. Coherence and complementarity also need to be achieved in trade and aid policies.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): First of all, the delegation of Ukraine would like to join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his reports submitted under agenda item 39. We commend the comprehensive and thorough analyses and action-oriented recommendations contained in those documents.

The beginning of the new millennium witnessed an unprecedented intensification of integration processes in Africa, marked by the creation of the African Union and the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a strategic framework for the rebirth of the continent. Those historic events symbolized a new starting point for advancing the African renaissance on the basis of the principles of ownership, partnership, commitment and responsibility.

As was stressed by the African leaders themselves at the Maputo Summit, implementation is the key for the success of the New Partnership. In this regard, we underscore the particular importance of the early operationalization of the African Peer Review Mechanism, the innovative system of self-monitoring and self-control.

While it is the primary responsibility of the Africans themselves to translate their aspirations for revival into reality, the international community as a whole has an equal responsibility to assist Africa in that endeavour. The fact that the NEPAD agenda has been given a high priority in the work of the United Nations, the Group of Eight and other important international forums testifies to the determination of Africa's partners to shoulder this responsibility.

We believe that the United Nations has an important role to play in NEPAD by coordinating global advocacy in support of the New Partnership. That challenging mission necessitates strengthening collaboration, coordination and coherence among the various United Nations components. In this context, we take positive note of the establishment of the Office of

the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, which serves as a focal point for NEPAD in the United Nations system.

We believe that the success of NEPAD will depend to a large extent on proper dissemination of information and on the mass education of the African people as to its objectives. That is why, in our view, one of the priorities of the United Nations should be to popularize NEPAD and increase local awareness of the programme, or, in the words of the Secretary-General, to give visibility to NEPAD.

Ukraine, as a country which has a long history of friendly relations and partnership with Africa, pledges its continued support for sustainable development of the continent, first of all by deepening mutually beneficial cooperation with African States. We are closely following the process of NEPAD's implementation, and I would like to reaffirm our genuine interest in participating in bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes for its specific sectoral priorities, such as the educational, agricultural and transport fields.

All of us present in this Hall are aware of the close interlinkage between the issues of development and of peace and security. It will not be possible to attain NEPAD's objectives and the Millennium Goals without settling unresolved conflicts in Africa and moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.

Addressing in September 2000 the momentous Millennium Summit and the Security Council summit, the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, put forward an initiative to develop, within the framework of the United Nations, a comprehensive conflict-prevention strategy. That idea has gained even greater relevance since then.

The complex nature of conflicts in Africa should be addressed in a comprehensive and integrated manner, and, in this regard, I would like to make some key points.

First, equally responsible actions are required on the part of all relevant United Nations bodies, primarily the Security Council. That organ should, in our view, continue to be at the front line of international efforts to address the conflict situations in Africa.

Secondly, given the fact that the origins of outbreaks of violence often are of a social and economic nature, enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council is indispensable in addressing the root causes of hostilities.

Thirdly, the situation that prevails in Africa today highlights the importance of increased United Nations coordination and dialogue with regional and subregional organizations. Ukraine strongly advocates support on the part of the international community for the activity of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other regional structures, which have conflict management and peacemaking as their central agenda. In that regard, we highly commend the assumption by the African countries of the primary responsibility for the stability of the continent.

Ukraine has always been committed to the objectives of peace and security in Africa and has been making a practical contribution to international peace efforts there. The participation of Ukrainian peacekeepers in the United Nations missions in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia-Eritrea testifies to that commitment. Moreover, I would like to use this opportunity to inform the Assembly of the arrangements being undertaken in Ukraine with respect to participation in the newly created United Nations Mission in Liberia.

As the Secretary-General rightly argues on page 1 of his report on NEPAD's implementation,

> "Together, the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership are a formula for success".

In the context of the forthcoming visits of the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, to Africa this fall, I would like to reaffirm my country's readiness to continue to contribute to the promotion of international solidarity and partnership with the continent.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I would like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for the first consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

I wish to associate myself with the statement made by Ambassador Bennouna on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

As the country outside Africa with the largest afro-descendent population in the world, and with strong historical and cultural ties to the continent, Brazil welcomed the New Partnership for Africa's Development. In our view, the ownership and

leadership of African countries regarding the definition of the priorities, strategies and actions foreseen therein, together with the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership, constitute the main merits of NEPAD and the right recipe for its success.

More than a decade ago, due to the magnitude of the problems affecting the continent, the international community identified Africa as its main target for cooperation. Conflicts, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined made prospects for development in Africa even bleaker than in other regions of the world.

Endeavours undertaken during the 1990s did not lead to the expected results. On the contrary, the number of poor people increased dramatically and many other problems were aggravated, including political instability and conflicts, which continued to hamper development efforts. Those problems were made even more serious by an unfavourable international environment in which protectionism prevailed and the price of commodities fell sharply, as did the flow of official development assistance and investments towards the African continent.

In response, African leaders decided collectively to take on the challenge of designing their own development strategy, based on a spirit of brotherhood and solidarity, which resulted in NEPAD. Last year, the General Assembly urged the international community and the United Nations system to organize their support for African countries around the principles, objectives and priorities of NEPAD.

As shown in the report of the Secretary-General, African countries have been doing their part. They have taken action in several areas, such as health, education, food security and infrastructure, and have also further developed important concepts and mechanisms foreseen in NEPAD, such as the identification of national focal points and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Brazil welcomes the fact that the African leaders incorporated the Millennium Development Goals as a central part of NEPAD. The Secretary-General's report shows that, despite recent increases in official development assistance and progress in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, international support to Africa has, so far, fallen short of what is needed. In order to halve the number of people living in poverty by 2015, African countries will require an average annual economic growth of 7 per cent.

Coherence in the trade and aid policies of developing countries, along with disbursement of pledged resources and increased foreign investments, will be essential to support and supplement African endeavours towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals.

Due to its universality, neutrality and great experience, the United Nations family has a very important role to play in supporting NEPAD. As shown in the Secretary-General's report, the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies have been actively supporting African development efforts in many fields. For these actions to have greater impact, increased collaboration and coordination among the different United Nations institutions is very desirable.

The United Nations has also been playing a very positive role in countries emerging from conflicts. In that regard, we support the efforts of the Economic and Social Council in post-conflict situations and the contribution of the Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, our sister country.

Brazil is determined to continue contributing to development efforts in Africa. Throughout the years, we have developed a special relation with the five African Portuguese-speaking countries through the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, which we hope will continue to thrive. Our President will shortly visit five countries in Africa in order to pursue cooperation efforts.

Despite our limited resources, we have been involved in a series of initiatives which include debt cancellation or alleviation, technical cooperation and capacity-building. We are very willing to continue sharing experiences that have proved successful in Brazil in fighting poverty, hunger, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS, among other challenges.

We are convinced of the value of South-South cooperation, as a supplement to North-South cooperation. Similar realities and problems can clearly benefit from similar solutions. We invite developed countries and the United Nations system as a whole to enhance their support of this modality of cooperation, including through triangular arrangements, so as to ensure its sustainability and long-term positive results.

For NEPAD to harvest positive results and become the landmark that we all desire, international support and cooperation, in a true spirit of solidarity, are essential. The conditions exist and the time is ripe. Let us implement the actions and fulfil the commitments that were made. Africa cannot wait 10 more years.

Mr. Kim Sam-hoon (Republic of Korea): My delegation is pleased to note the firm commitment demonstrated by the African countries during the past year to integrate the priorities and the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) into their national policies and development planning frameworks. We are fully supportive of Africa's ownership and leadership of NEPAD. International solidarity and partnership, while necessary and important, can be effective only to the extent that the African countries take charge of their own development. In that regard, we encourage the African countries to continue to mobilize domestic support, as well as resources, for the implementation of NEPAD.

In order to ensure NEPAD's forward momentum, issues of political stability and good governance must be addressed. Conflict and civil strife continue to be the first and greatest roadblock to African development. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that security must be elevated to the highest priority in African affairs and that NEPAD economic programmes must be bolstered by strong institutions for conflict prevention and management. Thus, we welcome the initiatives of the African Union to strengthen regional mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution. In particular, we commend the African Union's ongoing efforts to establish a Peace and Security Council under its authority. Moreover, we believe that the African Union's progress toward establishing a pan-African parliament represents an important step towards the development and the integration of the continent.

Good governance is the other key to the successful implementation of NEPAD. We commend the establishment of the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism, to which 16 countries have already acceded. We believe that the Mechanism is a very good way to put mutual accountability to work for good economic and political governance. We encourage more countries to join in this important initiative. Moreover, we would like to see the international community provide technical support to the African countries to ensure that the Mechanism is fully functional as a vital aspect of NEPAD.

The international community must fulfil its commitment to NEPAD through continued and strengthened financial support and assistance in the area of capacity-building. In that regard, we welcome the recent increases in official development assistance to match the financial commitments of African countries to their national NEPAD programmes. Over the past 15 years, the Republic of Korea has contributed around $2 billion of official development assistance to developing countries under the framework of South-South cooperation. Despite our current economic difficulties, we continue to increase our official development assistance on an annual basis.

Equally important, we believe, is assistance for human resources development and capacity-building. The international community should continue to share its experience and expertise with the African countries. This cooperation is particularly important in the field of information and communications technologies, which has become an indispensable means of harnessing the benefits of the globalizing world. With financing from the Republic of Korea Economic Commission for Africa Fund, my Government has undertaken projects that have included the establishment of an African information and telecommunications centre. We have also participated in human resources development projects, including the invitation of African ministers of education to the Republic of Korea for study tours.

Since 1992, we have invited some 1,200 foreign trainees in the information and communication technologies (ICT) field to participate in human resources development programmes in my country and have dispatched more than 500 Korean ICT experts and volunteers to implement programmes overseas. We have also sponsored an international conference on reviving private investment in Africa, as well as gender-based leadership development programmes.

Based on its own experience, the Republic of Korea cannot overstate the importance of trade to national development. Thus, we would like to see the international community make efforts to expand market access for African products. I am pleased to report that my Government has adopted a preferential scheme in which duty-free and quota-free market access is granted to a substantial number of products originating in least developed countries, the majority of which are in Africa. As a result, the Republic of Korea is now importing 4.8 per cent of all exports from least developed countries. According to recent World Trade

Organization (WTO) statistics, this makes us the world's fourth largest importer of those countries' products.

Moreover, the Republic of Korea continues to provide assistance to developing countries in capacity-building in the area of trade negotiations. My Government has invited 160 trade officials from developing countries for courses and seminars on international trade law and the details of the WTO agreement.

Another crucial issue for NEPAD's forward momentum is debt, which has sapped the energy of many developing countries. We would like to see significant efforts made to solve the debt problems of the heavily indebted poor countries in Africa. By exploring such options as debt restructuring and debt relief, we believe that a final resolution can be achieved that will contribute to the sustained economic growth of the such countries. For its part, the Republic of Korea has made a contribution this year of $10 million to the Trust Fund for heavily indebted poor countries and encourages other countries to make efforts to fill the financial gap in the Trust Fund.

We applaud the steps taken by many United Nations agencies in support of NEPAD. Individually and in collaboration with one another, they are providing valuable assistance that is in tune with the needs of the various sectors of NEPAD. However, as the report of the Secretary-General (A/58/254) points out, there is room for greater coherence and coordination in their work. In this regard, we hope that the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa can play a greater role in enhancing the coherence, coordination and effectiveness of the United Nations in support of NEPAD.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea would like to renew its commitment to assisting the African countries in their efforts for development. We remain confident that the resolute commitment and political will of the African countries, met by an effective response from the international community, will encourage further progress in the implementation of NEPAD.

Mr. Aye (Myanmar): My delegation would first like to express our appreciation for the consolidated report prepared by the Secretary-General (A/58/254) on the implementation of resolution 57/7 of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, which entrusted the international community and the United Nations system with organizing support for African countries in accordance with the principles, objectives and priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). My delegation also commends the report presented by the Secretary-General (A/58/352) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development. Both reports contain a comprehensive review of the progress made in the implementation of NEPAD and the establishment of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The reports also identify the challenges and constraints encountered in implementation.

Africa has suffered through considerably difficult times, and it continues to encounter a complex array of problems, to the extent that we cannot expect their immediate resolution. Nevertheless, Africa's record of achievements thus far must also be acknowledged. The international community, for its part, needs to continue and increase the momentum of its assistance and demonstrate its solidarity with our African partners.

My delegation is heartened by two recent developments directed towards the realization of the NEPAD initiative. The first is the Maputo Declaration adopted at the second session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union held last July, which reiterated the political will and resolve of the African leaders to implement NEPAD as a holistic, comprehensive and integrated strategic framework developed by African leaders themselves as a home-grown initiative. The second development is the progress made in the implementation of an African Peer Review Mechanism, aimed at increasing the transparency and accountability of African Governments. Those two positive developments indicate that the NEPAD process has been moving forward to address the problems at hand.

Such commitments made by the African leaders, commendable as they are, will not be sufficient to overcome the many difficulties Africa is presently encountering. The majority of Africa's population lives on inadequate incomes. And more than 24 million are suffering the effects of HIV/AIDS; they can ill-afford the expensive but essential drugs available to treat them. The mortality rate among young children remains high and primary school enrolment is low. The recent economic climate in Africa is not very encouraging, as the year 2002 was characterized by a slowdown in economic growth, with only a modest recovery expected in 2003.

In the light of those developments, it is imperative that African countries redouble their efforts and demonstrate that Africa remains a viable development partner in the world. At the same time it necessarily follows that the international community must respond appropriately by assisting our African friends to help themselves.

In this context, it is of significance that the Government of Japan pledged $1 billion in new aid for education and health care in Africa at the recent Tokyo International Conference on African Development. It is also a positive development to see a rebound in official development assistance to Africa, which has increased from $17.7 billion in 2001 to around $18.6 billion in 2002. The Group of Eight has also provided three quarters of official development assistance to Africa, and its members have committed themselves to participate in the Africa Action Plan to provide $6 billion annually to African countries to spur growth and contribute to poverty alleviation.

But these developments, however encouraging, are still far from adequately addressing the many and varied needs of Africa. Developed countries need to make additional resources available towards achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product as official development assistance to developing countries.

In the area of trade, improved market access for African exports is playing an essential role towards the attainment of sustainable economic growth. Some developed countries have begun to demonstrate flexibility on agricultural subsidies and other issues. The recent World Trade Organization agreement allowing countries with insufficient pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity to import inexpensive generic drugs also has been widely welcomed in developing countries, especially in Africa, where the incidence of HIV/AIDS is pervasive. Malaria and tuberculosis also pose a health threat and have a long-term negative impact on labour productivity. The failure at Cancún, however, has dampened hopes for further progress in those areas.

My delegation is of the view that South-South cooperation remains a key instrument to assist African development. The trend of increased economic and technical cooperation between Africa and other developing regions in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean is particularly welcome. The recently concluded Asian-African Subregional Organizations Conference, held at Bandung, Indonesia, last July is an example of the revitalization of the spirit of the Afro-Asian movement and solidarity that began some 50 years ago.

My delegation welcomes the role that the United Nations is playing in the implementation of NEPAD by helping to structure activities in accordance with the priorities of the Agenda. The Secretary-General's efforts to establish the Office of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa are also noteworthy. We must also give due recognition to the productive role that the private sector and civil society can play to ensure the success of NEPAD.

Durable peace, security and sustainable development in Africa are intertwined and interrelated. In these circumstances, NEPAD remains the most viable approach to achieving sustainable African development as well as durable peace. It is essential that the international community remain engaged with the countries of Africa for the successful implementation of the home-grown process so wisely drawn up by the African leaders.

Mr. Samala (Nigeria): Let me state at the outset that Nigeria aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the Kingdom of Morocco and by Mozambique on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and of the African Union, respectively.

Nearly 12 months ago, the Assembly held a joint debate on the causes of conflict and the promotion of global peace and sustainable development on our continent. A few weeks earlier, the Assembly had also held a high-level dialogue on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The debate on NEPAD was a watershed event, and the one on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace once again shone a spotlight on the difficult road to peace and development on the African continent.

Since those two debates, conflicts in the African region have intensified rather than diminished. Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, the Central African Republic, Sao Tome and Principe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have gone through one crisis or another, to varying degrees. Guinea-Bissau and Liberia, more than any other, made dramatically clear the serious consequences of indecision and inaction by the international community.

Nigeria, along with members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), responded positively to the crisis in our subregion. In Liberia, an ECOWAS force was dispatched to stabilize the situation in that country. To further the process, Nigeria successfully negotiated an exit strategy that enabled former President Charles Taylor, the principal player in the Liberia conflict, to relinquish political power and go into exile.

It is important to note that, in the absence of peace in Liberia, it will be very difficult to achieve peace in neighbouring Sierra Leone, Guinea Conakry and Côte d'Ivoire.

As concerns Guinea-Bissau, I and five other ECOWAS Foreign Ministers led a mediation mission during which successful mediation efforts were deployed and a truce between the military and former President Kumba Yalá achieved. That paved the way for the establishment of a transitional Government under new leadership.

African countries have thus proved, in both words and deeds, their determination and their commitment to confront head-on the issue of conflict on the African continent. The establishment by the African Union of the Peace and Security Council and also of a peace and security corps will, hopefully, enable African Governments to mediate and possibly to resolve conflicts. However, the establishment of the Council should not be seen or used as an excuse for the international community to shrink from playing an active role in the search for peace on the African continent.

It will be necessary to develop and strengthen African capacity for conflict resolution. Furthermore, the international community, in particular the developed countries and the donor institutions, must endeavour to balance their support for peace and security measures with adequate support for socio-economic development in the African continent. This will have the effect of curbing conflict and providing a secure environment for durable development to take place on the continent.

The African Union will intensify its efforts for the early establishment of an African standby force, which will be capable of rapid deployment and intervention in areas of conflict on the continent. In this regard, Nigeria looks forward to support from the international community in order to realize this important goal of the African continent.

While we commend the United Nations system for its remarkable work in Sierra Leone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Côte d'Ivoire, we cannot overlook its hesitant response to the crises in the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia. The Security Council did not act decisively to contain those crises. Not surprisingly, the conflicts resulted in horrendous carnage, human rights abuses, deprivations, the displacement of persons and political instability in those three countries.

Nevertheless, Nigeria commends the Council for sending its team to West Africa to make an on-the-spot assessment of the security situation in the subregion. Similarly, Nigeria commends the Economic and Social Council for sending its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict to Guinea Bissau last October. Indeed, the visit of the two teams had a calming effect on the conflicts in the West African region.

In our view, it is much cheaper to contain a conflict in its incipient stage than to reconstruct and rehabilitate after the destruction. Therefore, peacekeeping and peace-building measures must have an inbuilt early warning and response mechanism to avert the need for post-conflict developments. It would be better and more cost-effective to respond to the early warning signals before they escalated into full-blown conflicts. Therefore, the promotion of good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law, accountability, transparency and the freedom to make choices are fundamental for nurturing a culture of peace and sustainable development in the African continent. In that regard, we commend the Secretary-General for his report (A/58/352), which addresses the questions of who is doing what, and to what effect in the African continent.

It is also appropriate at this stage to point out that the items on our agenda today concern implementation, not examination of causes and effects. However, it is important to reiterate that poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, unemployment, the ready availability of small arms and people's willingness to buy diamonds at cheaper prices outside the world market fuel conflicts in the African continent.

Furthermore, the international community's inaction and non-implementation of its commitments also have a direct bearing on the conflicts in our continent. However, it is gratifying to note that several

United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and the recently created Office of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, to mention a few of those actively involved in the promotion of peace in some of the complex situations in the African continent, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General.

However, durable peace and sustainable development need an environment that promotes transparency, accountability, economic growth, social harmony, participation, inclusiveness and, to a greater extent, freedom. The capacity of African Governments to provide those elements and all the social services is very weak today, as the Secretary-General reminded us in his report.

It is in this millennium that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is expected to operate. The objective of the NEPAD initiative is to lift Africa to a higher plane, anchored on the assumption of a robust economy, functional institutions and structures and a sustainable environment.

But, by most accounts, the prospects for economic recovery in the African continent still look bleak. In 2002, five African countries experienced a negative economic growth rate. That trend does not augur well for durable peace and development in the African continent. On the contrary, as the Secretary-General has pointed out, the challenges of poverty reduction in Africa are enormous. Nigeria agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment that while economic and political reforms, including good governance, sound social and economic policies, domestic resource mobilization and allocation are important for poverty reduction, they are not sufficient for achieving sustainable development.

Despite their daunting tasks, African Governments have made progress in the implementation of NEPAD. Nigeria and several other countries have established national focal points, and we are on course in integrating NEPAD priorities into our national development plans. These countries are to be commended for their efforts, and urge all those that have yet to do so, including the international community, to take the necessary steps to integrate the NEPAD priorities into their programmes and projects in support of the NEPAD initiatives.

The establishment of the Panel of Eminent Persons to oversee the African Peer Review Mechanism is a step in the right direction. Nigeria and 15 other African countries have voluntarily subscribed to the Mechanism and have agreed to present themselves for peer review on good governance and accountability in the next three months. It is our hope that the results of the Peer Review will end any lingering doubts about the irreversible commitment of African Governments to the implementation of NEPAD.

Nigeria welcomes the practical steps taken by the G-8 countries and the United Nations in support of the implementation of NEPAD. In particular, Nigeria appreciates the G-8's African Action Plan announced at the Kananaskis Summit and reiterated at the Evian Summit in 2003. Nigeria also welcomes the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, which my dear brother, Mr. Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, is heading as Under-Secretary-General, and urges that the Office be adequately funded.

While applauding these practical measures, Nigeria hopes that African countries will accelerate their mobilization of domestic resources and internal savings while our development partners undertake to commit more resources beyond the $13 billion so far committed for the implementation of NEPAD's priorities and programmes.

It is a matter of regret that many NEPAD projects remain on the drawing board today because Africa lacks the requisite resources to implement them. To make resources available, developed countries must urgently address the protracted questions of trade, market access, agricultural subsidies, official development assistance, foreign direct investment, high levels of external debt and the flight of capital. Since trade is an engine for development and economic growth, developed countries must make the necessary concessions at the resumed talks of the World Trade Organization in December this year and respond more positively to Africa's urgent call for a fair, equitable and rule-based international trade and financial system.

Africa is also constrained by the scourge of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other deadly diseases. The socio-economic losses caused by their

prevalence are incalculable. Unless those diseases are contained, Africa will lose not only its productive work force, but also several generations of its population.

The greatest challenge in Africa is to overcome the high incidence of conflict in order to make it possible for the continent to move forward with its development goals and programmes. Complementary partnerships between African Governments and the African people and between Africa and the international community will be required to ensure lasting peace, stability and sustainable development.

A new enterprise for Africa's development cannot thrive in an atmosphere of conflict. Nor will it be effective without international cooperation.

In conclusion, therefore, Nigeria fully welcomes and appreciates the efforts of the international community to ensure that Africa's determination to lay a solid foundation for integrated sustainable economic development becomes a reality. We believe, however, that if those efforts are to bear fruit and if we are to avoid the pitfalls of past initiatives, there must be full implementation and fulfilment of all commitments made by the international community during the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Implementation must take place in an integrated and coordinated manner, so as to ensure synergy and the effectiveness of these processes. That is the only way to ensure Africa's permanent and sustainable development and to enable the continent to claim the twenty-first century as Africa's century.

Mr. Sermoneta (Israel): I would like at the outset to note with satisfaction the fact that this year the Assembly is considering both the issue of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the causes of conflict in Africa in a joint debate. In our opinion, this not only accurately reflects the close link between peace and development, but also contributes to the focalization of the work of the Organization, a principle that we strongly support.

Israel welcomes the first consolidated report on progress in the implementation of and international support for NEPAD (A/58/254). The report outlines in a comprehensive fashion progress stemming from actions taken by African countries, as well as the responses of the international community and the United Nations system, while at the same time offering a coherent analysis of the challenges and constraints faced at each level.

As in the past, Israel wishes to reiterate its strong support for the initiatives and principles adopted by the African Union in its efforts to achieve its developmental goals. This African-Union-led, -owned and -managed initiative, and the important elements that it includes, constitute an outstanding example of how ownership and regional cooperation can be harnessed to pursue development and address challenges. By striking an appropriate balance among the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership, NEPAD could potentially improve the chances for progress and prosperity in that troubled continent.

In this context, we commend the accession of 16 African countries to the African Peer Review Mechanism. As that Mechanism reflects a genuine desire on the part of African nations to make good on the promises of NEPAD — good governance, democracy, peace and security, human rights and sound economic management — we would like to encourage other countries to join the Mechanism soon.

We note with appreciation the creation of national focal points for NEPAD in several African countries, the completion of the NEPAD health programme and the recent endorsement in Maputo of the environmental programme. At the same time, and given the importance of education as a primary and critical component in any development strategy, we would like to take this opportunity to express hope for the speedy implementation of the educational programme of NEPAD.

Israel welcomes the commitment of the United Nations in strengthening collaboration and coordination among its components in order to provide the necessary support for the effective implementation of NEPAD, and endorses the recommendations specified in the report.

Israel has always considered its relations with Africa to be of the highest priority. From the late 1950s, while still a developing country itself, Israel sought to build development partnerships with the newly independent States of sub-Saharan Africa. In line with this long record of cooperative work throughout Africa, and the continuing tradition of friendship and solidarity, Israel is offering its experience and expertise to help NEPAD succeed and the African continent flourish by sharing our know-how in areas such as food security, the empowerment

of women, education and health, both bilaterally and with the participation of United Nations development funds and programmes.

In addition to our bilateral aid and training programmes, Israel also actively supports international initiatives such as the World Bank's International Development Association programmes and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative for debt reduction. Israel has already forgiven the debt of a number of African countries, and will continue to consider additional debt relief to other States, to the extent that our limited resources allow.

Although our assistance may appear rather modest to some, one must remember that as a nation of barely 6 million citizens carrying a heavy financial burden arising from the need to defend their existence, Israel's per capita contribution to Africa's future is among the most significant in the world. Based on a friendship that has endured over time, we are committed to working together with African countries to build on the momentum of NEPAD and to reach its promised outcome. We are doing so because we are convinced that the hardships of Africa are not a burden, but a shared responsibility. We are doing so because we believe in the potential of Africa and its people.

Ms. Motjope (Lesotho): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Permanent Representative of Lesotho, Ambassador Moleko.

I wish to join other delegations in extending my warm congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election, as well as to the other members of the Bureau. I am confident that, under your able leadership, our deliberations will be crowned with success. Lesotho associates itself with the statement made by the Kingdom of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

A year ago, on 16 September 2002, the United Nations General Assembly convened a high-level plenary meeting to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Through its resolutions 57/2 of 16 September 2002 and 57/7 of 4 November 2002, the General Assembly decided to bring to a close the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and to endorse NEPAD as the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations system, should concentrate its efforts for Africa's development.

NEPAD is viewed as an expression of Africa's determination to assume strong leadership for poverty eradication and sustainable development. In this regard, it is important to note that the priorities of NEPAD are closely linked with those of the Millennium Development Goals. NEPAD therefore deserves the full support of the international community, including the United Nations system, as it is an important element in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

My delegation welcomes the two comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General entitled "The New Partnership for Africa's Development: first consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support" (A/58/254) and "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/58/352). The report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) recognizes the good will of African countries, through various measures that they have taken, to ensure that NEPAD becomes the framework for international cooperation between Africa and the international community. Let me also take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for establishing the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. We call for adequate funding for that Office to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

In Africa, efforts to achieve sustainable development continue to be undermined by a variety of factors, including conflicts, humanitarian crises, natural disasters and diseases including HIV/AIDS. For the international community to successfully address those factors, serious attention must be paid to fulfilling the commitments made at all major United Nations conferences and summits and to focusing greater attention on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. My delegation welcomes the international community's continued commitment and supportive role with regard to NEPAD and the role of the United Nations in coordinating activities related to ensuring its success at the regional and subregional levels.

Economic growth and political development in Africa are threatened by the prevalence of conflicts. Some of those conflicts are interminable, while others are spontaneous yet equally destabilizing. As a result, they pose serious challenges to development efforts in

Africa. Without peace and security, long-term development and poverty eradication are only utopian ideals. NEPAD recognizes that the primary responsibility for Africa's future and development rests with Africans themselves, but Africa needs support from its development partners.

While African leaders have shown their firm commitment to assuming responsibility for peace and security on their continent, what has been lacking is a rapid response to conflict situations such as those we have witnessed in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and elsewhere. Experience has shown that, where the international community responds promptly, the results are clear, but that, where there is hesitancy, we have carnage and mindless destruction. African Governments are determined to promote peace and security on the continent through democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, sound economic management, and involvement by civil society in the decision-making processes through consultations. The appointment of a panel of eminent persons to oversee the African Peer Review Mechanism is a commendable development and a concrete indication that Africans are serious about charting a new course for themselves.

My delegation welcomes the Africa Action Plan adopted by the Group of Eight (G-8) world economic Summit held in Canada in June 2002. The Action Plan is undoubtedly a valuable and vital framework for a new partnership between Africa and the G-8. We also welcome the commitment to implement the Action Plan made at the G-8 Summit held in Evian, France, in June 2003. In addition, let me take this opportunity to welcome the progress made through the Tokyo international Conference on African Development, Japan's initiative aimed at implementation of NEPAD.

Lesotho is committed to the implementation of NEPAD. Like many other African countries, Lesotho is committed to peace and security, democracy, good governance and respect for human rights. We have made progress towards political tolerance and inclusiveness. However, Lesotho still faces the challenge of ensuring that peace and stability are entrenched and that democracy as a way of life is deepened throughout society. To that end, the Government of Lesotho is working on strengthening institutional structures that will ensure good governance as well as accountability in the public service and private sectors and transparency throughout Government at the central and local levels. Lesotho is currently investing heavily in stamping out corruption within the public sector.

The African vision is clear. What remains to be done is implementation, and if NEPAD is to avoid going the way of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, both Africa and its development partners must fulfil their commitments. Africans have demonstrated leadership and ownership of the initiative, and it is expected that the international community will continue to extend the requisite support to NEPAD.

Mr. Dube (Botswana): First of all, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his two reports, on progress made in implementation of the programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254) and on implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/58/352).

Through its resolutions 57/2 and 57/7, adopted in September and November 2002 respectively, the General Assembly welcomed NEPAD as a programme of the African Union that embodies the vision and commitment of all African Governments and peoples for peace and development. Furthermore, in its resolution 57/300 of December 2002, the General Assembly adopted the NEPAD programme as a framework for United Nations support for Africa and mandated the creation of an Office at United Nations Headquarters led by an Under-Secretary-General and dedicated to supporting African development in general and NEPAD in particular. The functions of that new Office were identified as advocacy, reporting, coordination and servicing of the intergovernmental bodies at United Nations Headquarters.

It is therefore timely and appropriate that the General Assembly is meeting today to consider the first consolidated report by the Secretary-General on progress in implementation of the NEPAD programme. Botswana is a member of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, and we have remained committed to supporting and ensuring full implementation of NEPAD priorities and programmes.

In its resolution 57/7, the General Assembly welcomed the commitment of African countries to integrate the priorities of NEPAD into their national policies and development planning frameworks, to

maintain full ownership and leadership in developing and utilizing such policies and frameworks, and to mobilize domestic resources in support of NEPAD. The resolution also welcomed the commitment of African countries themselves to peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management.

The Secretary-General's report highlights the actions taken in the support and implementation of NEPAD programmes, as well as the challenges and constraints ahead. The report also indicates that a number of positive steps are being taken by African countries towards attaining these goals. The report notes, however, that African countries and their regional organizations should now incorporate into their development plans the NEPAD priorities and programmes, including the identification and creation of national focal points, the reorientation of the activities of regional organs to reflect those of NEPAD, the implementation of NEPAD health programmes at national and regional levels and, finally, the completion of a comprehensive plan for African development and programmes in education, the environment and infrastructure development.

It must be pointed out, however, that the report contains few concrete examples of programmes that are now under implementation in our respective countries. Africa cannot survive on ideals and platitudes alone. It is clear that African Governments themselves still have a lot to do before they can implement NEPAD at the national and regional levels. Of course, we are still in the early stages of this, as the programme itself is still new.

Africa's development partners, on the other hand, have responded positively to NEPAD. The report indicates, for example, that over the past two years official development assistance to Africa rose from $17.729 billion to $18.615 billion. We believe that this is mainly because the NEPAD initiative, which has been formulated and developed by Africans themselves, has generated strong interest and excitement among our partners.

The goals and priorities of NEPAD do not differ from the Millennium Development Goals, especially in that NEPAD has identified the following areas as critical: the pursuit of peace and security and the related issues of poverty reduction and good governance; agriculture and food security; diversification and competitiveness of Africa's output and exports, and related issues of market access; and infrastructure development.

However, with Africa's performance appearing so bleak on some fronts — in regard particularly to growth, trade, foreign direct investment and poverty — some pessimists have wondered whether it is realistic to expect our continent to meet the Millennium Development Goals and other ambitious targets. They note, for example, that, despite many international and regional initiatives — including NEPAD — by 2015, poverty in Africa will have increased and that HIV/AIDS prevalence rates will also have risen. Furthermore, they cite studies on African economies that also indicate that the HIV/AIDS pandemic will reduce the gross domestic product growth rate by between 0.4 per cent and 1.5 per cent during the same period. To make matters worse, debt relief in Africa is still inadequate. This is further compounded by the high domestic burden, high interest rates and little or no new private sector investment.

We, however, still believe that Africa is a continent filled with dynamism and potential. What we need now is to concentrate on the twin challenges of development and poverty eradication, which is what NEPAD is trying to do. These can only be achieved through a concerted global effort. There needs to be a greater push to make NEPAD the overarching framework for public policy, and to ensure that NEPAD's priorities are better understood by civil society in Africa. Ownership of NEPAD must relate to the needs of the ordinary people of Africa and not just to Governments.

We note that the review of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report regarding the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace in Africa indicates that there has been progress, although it has been slow and uneven. We should bear in mind that there is a clearly established link between poverty on the one hand and political instability on the other. Poverty breeds resentment, anger and despair, and Africa is plagued by all three of these.

Like any other people condemned to the margins of society, the majority of Africans feel that they have nothing to gain by participating in the democratic process. Instead, some believe that they have nothing to lose if they resort to violence, for, as they perceive it, their Governments and the international community are indifferent to their suffering.

Our failure to resolve conflicts in Africa poses a major threat to NEPAD. It is incumbent, therefore, upon all of us to redouble our efforts in conflict resolution and post-conflict management.

In conclusion, let me express our deep appreciation for the efforts made by the Group of Eight (G-8) leaders for their continued constructive engagement with African leaders in the NEPAD agenda and their adoption of the G-8 Africa Action Plan. I would also like to implore the rest of the international community to continue to follow their example in making concrete commitments of support for the revitalization of the African continent.

We put our trust in the United Nations as the focal point for the promotion and coordination of international efforts in the support of Africa's development strategy.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General on his excellent report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254). I associate myself with the statement of the Kingdom of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and with that of Mozambique on behalf of the African Union on NEPAD.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development, as a home-grown and -owned blueprint for Africa's development, has put Africa's economic and social development programmes at the heart of the international development agenda. Besides these issues of economic development, African countries are also emphasizing good governance, including corporate governance, the rule of law and democracy and putting in place a self-policing mechanism known as the African Peer Review Mechanism. Rather than being prodded by developed countries towards those good values, African countries have taken the bull by the horns and have declared to the whole world that they too are capable of appreciating good values, just as everybody else does, and that they are prepared to bring errant members to book through persuasion and dialogue. What they need from the developed world are resources to implement these programmes designed by themselves; hence their partnership with the developed world.

I will comment on a few areas on which I think we should focus to make this initiative more effective.

Mr. Ekua Avomo (Equatorial Guinea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

First, with regard to the African Peer Review Mechanism, it is not encouraging to learn that only 16 countries have acceded to the protocol. More work is needed — through concerted effort by the African Union secretariat, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa here at the United Nations Headquarters — by way of impressing it upon those countries that have not acceded to the Mechanism to do so.

Peace and security on the continent are necessary to provide a conducive atmosphere for economic development, including foreign investment. In that regard, the establishment of the Peace and Security Council by the African Union is a welcome measure. So far, 12 countries have ratified the Protocol, out of the 15 needed to make the Council operational. That is encouraging, and it is hoped that the necessary ratifications will be obtained soon.

In the Great Lakes region, thanks to the assistance and cooperation of the United Nations and the international community, we have seen regional efforts bear some fruit with regard to resolving the conflict in Burundi. Uganda commends the initiative of the Secretary-General, who convened a high-level meeting that adopted the Principles on Good-Neighbourly Relations and Cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development has been instrumental in finding durable peace in Sudan and Somalia.

Many players — including intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, the United Nations system and Governments — have come forward to assist African countries in implementing NEPAD. Besides increased financial resources, more coordination and consultation is needed to mainstream NEPAD into various programmes of those organizations and bodies. To that end, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa must be strengthened by increasing the financial and human resources at its disposal. For example, the Office should be able to organize seminars and workshops in various parts of the continent to popularize NEPAD.

Skilled personnel and resources are needed at the secretariats of the ECA and NEPAD, as well as at the subregional and country levels, to help put in place development plans for various areas covered by

NEPAD. In that regard, I commend the United Nations Development Programme, which has made funds available to NEPAD to develop its five-year strategic plan. I also commend the United Nations Environment Programme, which has helped to develop an environmental plan for NEPAD.

Institutional mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure the success of NEPAD. In my own country, Uganda, efforts are under way to establish a NEPAD focal point. A Cabinet decision ruled that the national NEPAD secretariat would be hosted in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. A steering committee, made up of that Ministry, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a private sector foundation, civil society, the Prime Minister's office, the President's office and representatives of academia, was also established to oversee NEPAD's activities.

The national task force on NEPAD has been studying coordination models in other African countries from which best-practice recommendations for the institutional mechanism for NEPAD's implementation in Uganda can be made. To retain African ownership and leadership of NEPAD, the Government is expected to fund the activities of the NEPAD national focal point from the national budget. However, due to budgetary constraints, we need assistance to secure funds to get the national NEPAD coordinating structures started, as well as to design and implement an initial outreach programme.

Apart from developing a strategy to coordinate and oversee the implementation of Cabinet-approved policies, programmes and projects at the national level, the focal point is mandated to develop a communication strategy to effectively mobilize the private sector, local governments, traditional leaders and civil society, including women's organizations, in support of NEPAD.

Africa needs to invest more in human resources development if it is to realize its NEPAD goals. In that regard, education is a key. Sadly, not much has been achieved in this area, although some countries have made impressive progress. In Uganda, for example, we achieved the goal of universal primary education. In 1996 enrolment in primary schools stood at 2.5 million pupils. Today it is 7.8 million. The number of universities has risen from one in 1986 to 16 today; and only 5 are Government-funded, pointing to the role played by the private sector. It goes without saying that an educated populace is good for governance, and good for industrialization by providing skilled manpower.

Health and the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation are vital. Preventive measures like immunization and hygiene need to be stepped up. In Africa water-borne diseases are a menace. Improved sanitation and the provision of safe drinking water should therefore be a priority. In Uganda now, 55 per cent and 65 per cent of rural and urban populations, respectively, have clean water.

Finally, at the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Kananaskis G-8 Summit, the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development and various other conferences and summits, developed countries pledged themselves to assist Africa financially in its development goals at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. As Africans fulfil part of their bargain, we look forward to developed countries fulfilling their part, especially by increasing the flow of official development assistance, the target of which — 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product — is still an unrealized dream.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): It is with great pleasure that I take the floor on behalf of my delegation to speak on the agenda item entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". That item became part of the annual agenda of the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 57/7, of 4 November 2002. Concurrently, we are also debating today the sub-item entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", as per resolution 57/296, of December 2002.

Allow me, at the outset, to acknowledge the comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General, namely, the first consolidated report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254) and the updated report on conflicts (A/58/352). The quality of both reports is outstanding. We owe special thanks to the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa and to the Secretary General for preparing those reports.

Let me also take this opportunity to commend the United Nations system as a whole for its positive response in the implementation of NEPAD-related activities in individual African countries, as well as in

regional groups and throughout the world. The cluster approach is an imaginative intervention in achieving coherence and coordination among United Nations entities. In this regard, we further commend the global advocacy and coordination efforts in support of NEPAD undertaken by the Special Adviser on Africa through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, which periodically reviews and assesses the progress and work of United Nations entities in Africa to advance NEPAD's objectives and goals. We trust that these approaches and roles will be strengthened and remain adequately responsive to emerging challenges as NEPAD implementation continues.

NEPAD is a homegrown African initiative and a collective commitment to put Africa on a new path of development. NEPAD has recognized the systematic fetters and constraints which have left Africa on the margins of the global economy and social progress. The African continent is the least developed continent in the world. Not only that, it is the only continent where poverty is on the increase with more than 340 million people, or half the population, living on less than $1 a day. In Africa there are 34 of the world's 54 least developed countries.

NEPAD intends to reverse this situation. It is a framework for a new partnership with the international community designed to address the current challenges facing the African continent: issues such as escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other communicable diseases. In essence, NEPAD is a commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, notably the goal of reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015.

To achieve these Goals, NEPAD calls for attaining and sustaining an average growth of real gross domestic product of 7 per cent per year up to the year 2015. In order to attain that goal, NEPAD calls for a partnership of Governments, the private sector, civil society and development partners in the international community.

In order to translate its vision into tangible results, NEPAD has developed an initial plan which centres on the following priorities: first, to establish the conditions for sustainable development by addressing issues of peace and security, democracy, good governance, respect of human rights, as well as regional cooperation and capacity building; secondly, to address sectoral priorities in areas such as agriculture, infrastructure, human development and energy and thirdly, to mobilize resources by increasing domestic savings and investments, improving management of public revenue and expenditure and improving Africa's share in global trade and foreign direct investment.

NEPAD has been approved as the vision, strategic framework and socio-economic development programme of the African Union. It is the blueprint of the African Union to implement its objectives and a mechanism for accelerating implementation of the Abuja Treaty, as outlined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. NEPAD will be fully integrated into the African Union over a three-year period.

The African Union is working to put in place programmes and institutions which will assist in the implementation of NEPAD. It is also acknowledged by the African Union that genuine development and poverty reduction is only possible in an environment of true democracy, respect for human rights and peace and good governance at the national, regional and global levels. Long-term conditions for ensuring peace and security require policy measures to address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict and corruptive practices thrive in Africa.

My country is among the founding member States of the African Union, which has embraced NEPAD as one of its economic pillars. We totally support the principles and objectives of NEPAD, which are also in line with my Government's Economic Vision 2025, as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategy policy. I am delighted to say that NEPAD has been well received at the national level, including by relevant institutions in the public and private sectors. Efforts are also continuing to educate the general public to understand, cooperate and participate in the implementation of NEPAD initiatives.

The private sector is recognized as pivotal in the implementation of NEPAD. Tanzania has successfully completed a number of reforms that are conducive to fostering private sector development. Such reforms have included opening up financial sector participation, proactive encouragement of foreign investment through appropriate incentive packages and rationalization of the tax policy. Other reforms include establishment of commercial courts to deal with commercial disputes, improvement of business licensing procedures, liberalization of the domestic trade regime, which has

enhanced competition and productivity, as well as liberalization of the foreign exchange market.

Tanzania has also prepared write-ups of various projects in all sectors covered under NEPAD and already has submitted them to the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for funding. The Eastern African subregion is scheduled to meet at the summit level on 29 October 2003 in Nairobi, to rationalize these projects and see how best to cooperate and operationalize these projects. The major focus is expected to be on infrastructure development in the region.

At the August Summit of Heads of State and Government of the SADC countries in Dar es Salaam this year, the Summit's final communiqué urged member States to integrate NEPAD agreed priorities into their national development plans and to increase resource allocation to these priority areas. It is in this regard that we call upon our partners to come forward and assist in these initiatives. The Summit also mandated the Ministers of Trade, as a matter of urgency, to prepare negotiating guidelines and to initiate negotiations with the European Union on economic partnership agreements.

It should further be pointed out that NEPAD has also come up with what is described as a most innovative programme — the African Peer Review Mechanism. This is a systematic assessment of the performance of a country by member States whose ultimate objective is to help a country undergoing review improve its policy, adopt appropriate practices and comply with established standards, principles, codes and best practices consistent with political economic and corporate good governance. Peer review also helps in confidence-building among States and permits predictability with regard to policies and strategies in a given country or region. Tanzania totally subscribes to this mechanism.

We are pleased to see that NEPAD has received international acceptance as a framework for engagement with Africa on development. Significant interactions have been undertaken with the G-8, the European Union, various agencies of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, and non-G-8 development partners, such as the Nordic States, India and China, as well as the Commonwealth, and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process.

In these areas of cooperation with our partners, Tanzania, as one of the participants in the search for solutions to conflicts and for peace and security in the Great Lakes region of Africa, welcomes the assistance given by the G-8 countries, the European Union and, the United Nations, as well as bilateral assistance, to enable deployment of peace observers, monitors and peacekeeping troops in the region. For all of us involved, it should be pointed out that early and timely deployment is a tremendous issue of essence in realizing peace in conflict situations.

In conclusion, we urge greater coordination and harmonization of interventions with our partners. We are deeply aware of the need to streamline the coordination channels between NEPAD's Steering Committee and Implementation Committee with the national focal points to expedite the communication of decisions and follow-ups in both directions. We are all set on the right course; this initial review is encouraging. We have but to sustain the momentum of NEPAD's implementation with the requisite resources. We cannot afford to regress.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(spoke in Arabic)*: In 1998 the Secretary-General submitted a report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. A little over a year ago, the first summit meeting of the African Union adopted a document on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), in which the heads of State of Africa committed themselves to carry out a common vision, convinced as they were that an end had to be put to hunger, poverty, underdevelopment and marginalization, and to enable their countries to follow the path of sustainable development by allowing them to participate in an effective manner in the global economy.

We are now reviewing the progress achieved regarding the implementation of the New Partnership as regards conflicts in Africa. I should like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for the two reports he has prepared on these issues. They make clear what has been achieved during the past year as well as the obstacles that remain to be overcome.

The reports are contained in documents A/58/254 and A/58/352. They make clear the progress that has been achieved in putting an end to conflicts and achieving the priority goals of NEPAD. We welcome the fact that African countries have taken numerous

innovative measures, despite the fact that many of them have been ravaged by civil wars for so long. They have indeed begun to follow the path of negotiation and dialogue, which are essential for the full restoration of peace. They have been working to strengthen, adapt and manage the African Union mechanism. Let me mention here the acceleration of the implementation of the Protocol establishing the mechanism for the Council on Peace and Security as well as the efforts to establish the Pan-African Parliament, with a view to allowing all African peoples to contribute effectively to the development process.

Africa has emphasized certain priorities: food security, medical services and the development of educational institutions in order to achieve the goal of education for all. Investment in those areas has been encouraged, and joint projects have been initiated among the various countries. My country participated in the area of metallurgy, agriculture, wood harvesting and development projects, inter alia.

The General Assembly and other international forums have asked the international community and the United Nations to support the African initiative for the restoration of peace and security, and to help implement NEPAD. Cooperation between the African Union and the European Union is multifaceted, and we would like to mention in that regard the debt that has been forgiven by some countries in the context of official financial assistance. We have seen an increase in economic and technical cooperation among African, Asian and Latin American countries. This represents a real opportunity for cooperation among developing and African countries, which have long tried to establish this kind of triangular cooperation.

Furthermore, the United Nations has supported African efforts to restore peace and security on the African continent. Accordingly, peacekeeping missions were sent, along with special representatives, to encourage dialogue and to bring about national reconciliation in those countries in conflict. Certain United Nations agencies have adopted programmes to respond to Africa's priorities: peace and security in Afric ., food security, the provision of potable water, improvement of health services, information and communications technologies and the reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons and the use of national resources.

All those measures aim in the right direction, but a great deal remains to be done in the entire African continent. All its leaders have expressed their conviction that we must close the development gap, which has widened throughout centuries of unjust relations. All necessary resources should be used to finance NEPAD's programmes.

Though it is clear that Africa has benefited from the increase in official development assistance during the previous period, it is not sufficient. Therefore the development partners must support Africa in order that peace and security may be restored on the continent and ignorance, hunger and disease overcome. As the Secretary-General has said, the increase in official development assistance remains very modest compared to the assistance given to farmers in developed countries. Therefore this policy must be reviewed because of its adverse consequences on the African economy. In addition, the drop in agricultural output has jeopardized the lives of millions of people.

It is clear that the measures that have been taken by developed countries have reduced the debt burden of African States. However, a great deal of money is required to pay off the interest that is still owed, which has a negative impact on the educational, health and other sectors. We must resolve this longstanding problem. If we do not do so, unemployment will rise, leading to tension, desperation, marginalization and many other problems.

The Secretary-General in his two reports has made several recommendations as to how to overcome those problems standing in the way of the achievement of NEPAD's goals. This is very important, especially with respect to peace, security and development in Africa. Those objectives must be attained. However, we deem it necessary for the international community to focus on certain issues in order to stabilize Africa and to ensure that that partnership is genuine. Those issues are the following.

First, it is necessary to respect African societies, their histories and their cultures, and political conditions must not be imposed on them. Their characteristics must at all times be taken into account.

Secondly, donor partners need to realize that the more assistance they provide, the more they will help African efforts to put an end to conflicts and to help their societies socially and materially. As an example, I can cite restricting or curbing migration through the

adoption of administrative and legislative measures. It is clear that development programmes can assist countries that are experiencing emigration to stop it altogether.

Thirdly, we need to improve the infrastructure, including communications and roads. In that way, we can gain the maximum benefit from the resources provided and can finally solve the problem of food security.

Fourthly, we must resolve problems related to technology transfer in the development, economic and social sectors.

Fifthly, we must take into account the suffering of African peoples in past centuries and the pillaging of their natural resources.

The Secretary-General has said that Africa is at a turning point. That is true. The conflict settlement process has truly begin in a number of countries; African heads of State have reaffirmed their commitment to NEPAD's objectives; and the contributions of NEPAD's partners are encouraging. We must promote peace and development throughout the African continent. Any hesitation in that regard would constitute a political and moral failure. African countries and the rest of the international community, including the United Nations system and all other concerned parties, must together meet the challenge of developing Africa in its entirety.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased to take the floor under agenda item 39 (a), "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". In that regard, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/58/254). In addition, we should like to take note of the statement made this morning on behalf of the African Union by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique and the statement made this afternoon by the Permanent Representative of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Tunisia attaches great importance to our debate today, which attests to the commitment of United Nations Member States to supporting African development efforts. It offers us the opportunity to help address the challenge represented by implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We should recall that, in the Millennium Declaration, our heads of State or Government committed themselves to helping Africans in their fight to establish lasting peace and development and to eliminate poverty in order to integrate the African continent into the world economy.

In launching NEPAD, African leaders strove to reaffirm their collective will to promote the African continent within the framework of an integrated action plan based on a comprehensive concept of the attributes of sustainable development and relying primarily on Africa's own capacities. It is reassuring to note that this initiative has benefited from the support of the international community, particularly the Group of Eight (G-8), the countries of the European Union, international financial institutions, the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Council. We welcome the process in support of NEPAD, furthered at the Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

Since its launching, NEPAD has seen notable progress in its implementation. The Partnership attaches crucial importance to areas important for the continent such as regional integration, agriculture, food security, health, education, infrastructure, industrialization, the environment and tourism. Several African countries have undertaken measures with a view to establishing a national coordination body for NEPAD. As far as Tunisia is concerned, our country's economic and social policy is in harmony with the Partnership.

The United Nations system has a crucial role to play in terms of cooperation and coordination among its various components to mobilize the support necessary to implement NEPAD effectively. We welcome the fact that several institutions and agencies of the United Nations system have aligned their activities with NEPAD's priorities. We also stress the importance of involvement by the private sector, civil society and non-governmental organizations and of public support for its implementation. We express our appreciation to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, under the able guidance of Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, for its efforts in coordinating global activities to promote support for NEPAD. The Office certainly needs continued and even enhanced support from the United Nations Secretariat to continue its positive activities on behalf of our continent.

Africa's efforts cannot be successful without substantial support from the international community. Such solidarity should take the form of sufficient and reliable resources on the one hand, and favourable

external environment on the other. The scope of the problems and the complexity of the obstacles that the African continent must overcome to build the foundations of its infrastructure and socio-economic development demand that we be far more resolute and devote far more resources at both the national and international levels to ensuring for Africa, along with the world's other regions, economic growth and sustained and lasting development that will enable them to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

Over the past decade, many African countries intensified the process of democratization, of strengthening civil society and of promoting human rights and respect for the rule of law. African countries have also begun economic reforms to promote the establishment of solid macroeconomic foundations and the creation of an environment conducive to sustainable development, foreign direct investment and poverty reduction, particularly through effective public management. However, we must acknowledge that the current efforts of developed countries and the United Nations system still do not rise to the magnitude of the problems Africa must face. That insufficiency can be seen in official development assistance, investment and the problem of indebtedness. Indeed, official development assistance, despite the efforts of African countries to better utilize it, is constantly declining.

Africa's marginalization in the area of foreign direct investment is comparable to its marginalization in the area of trade. Despite African countries' considerable efforts to implement reforms in their trade policies, Africa's share of the world market has remained weak, representing less than 2 per cent. That situation is particularly disturbing, and the international community must help African countries put in place the material, institutional and organizational capacities necessary to support efforts aimed at promoting trade, improving market access, further reducing customs tariffs and lifting non-tariff barriers to African products.

Indebtedness remains one of the principal obstacles to economic recovery and sustained growth in Africa. The international community must continue to cooperate to lighten that burden. In this respect, we call upon creditor countries, private banks and multilateral financial institutions to help African countries to emerge more quickly and sustainably from their state of indebtedness, through the accelerated application of an enhanced and broadened Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative. We are, moreover, concerned about the fact that some countries that have reached the completion point have seen their indebtedness indicators worsen due to a drop in export revenue, often as a result of volatile commodity prices.

Countries emerging from conflict also need special treatment, and we must be flexible in providing support to them and generous in treating their debt arrears.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are increasingly acting as a catalyst for the promotion of social and economic development in African countries. African countries must develop ICT as an integral part of their national and regional development programmes. For their part, Africa's international partners must consider information and communication technologies as a matter of priority for African development. The convening of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in December this year and in Tunis in November 2005 will provide an opportunity for us to further examine the best ways and means of using ICT for African development.

We are convinced that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) provides us with an appropriate framework for the development of our continent. We take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal to the international community to take the necessary steps to provide the required assistance and support to that initiative.

With respect to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the Tunisian delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/58/352 before us. The most important lesson to be learned from that report is that, despite the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations, weak human and institutional capacity, a lack of financial resources, especially from foreign sources, as well as the continuation of conflict — both within and between States — slow and sometimes obscure that progress.

With regard to the promotion of peace and security, we call upon the international community and the United Nations system to involve themselves more fully in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in Africa. We also call for greater support for African initiatives in resolving conflict, including for

the operation of the Peace and Security Council established by the African Union.

Tunisia, which participates in a number of peacekeeping operations in Africa, reaffirms its ongoing determination to help its brother countries to overcome crises, as well as its commitment in support of operations decided upon by the Security Council to maintain security and stability in Africa.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): The Jamaican delegation wishes to align itself with the statement made this afternoon by the Permanent Representative of Morocco, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Our delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), contained in document A/58/254. The report shows that a positive start has been made and that NEPAD is beginning to register some progress in important areas. At the same time, the report draws attention to major challenges and constraints. There are severe problems, although they can be overcome. They arise from continued difficulties associated with unresolved conflicts, the ravages of the HIV pandemic and the economic challenges of globalization. Developing and sustaining momentum for NEPAD will require two things: a collective effort in Africa towards internal stabilization; and a commitment to the delivery of resources from the donor community. It matters to all of us that, through our combined effort, NEPAD should succeed. For our delegation this is a special priority, for Africa has always been close to the hearts of the Jamaican people.

In reviewing the progress made so far, there is reason for some cautious optimism. We note an increasing level of official development assistance in recent years, reversing the steady decline of the 1990s. But the level still remains substantially below that of 1990, despite the overall growth in the world economy. We therefore place great reliance on fulfilment of the pledges made at the Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences, as well as those made by the Group of Eight at the Evian Summit. The expected increase in quantum of official development assistance should be combined with further improvements in aid effectiveness by removing procurement requirements, excessive bureaucratic procedures and the conditionalities which restrict the delivery of development cooperation.

With regard to debt relief, we are encouraged that there is some movement under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative, but we are still worried by the reported complexities of the process. The qualification standards and complicated requirements may still be hindering the delivery of benefits promised under the programme.

The trade and investment pattern shows a mixed picture. Investment flows are not promising and, although there are some special arrangements to stimulate exports, they are still not enough to bring significant change. To generate investment flows, special promotional programmes will be needed beyond the mere liberalization of investment regimes. In this regard, we applaud the initiative of two European States for providing a fund for guarantees for particular areas of investment.

With reference to trade, if the Doha agenda is to help Africa, it is not just a matter of removing subsidies and opening new markets; there is a need for some stabilization of commodity prices. And all of that will have to be combined with the building of productive capacity. This will require a huge investment in the development of physical infrastructure and technological innovation in all sectors.

In agriculture, there is a need for innovation, not only for the expansion of agricultural exports, but also to break the recurring cycle of crop failures so as to improve food security. As regards industrialization, there is still a long way to go. But this must be an important part of an economic strategy for diversification with a view to achieving higher levels of economic growth, reducing vulnerability and increasing employment opportunities.

In all of this, there is an important role for the State to manage and stimulate the development of these important sectors. It goes beyond ensuring conditions of peace and stability and developing sound governance principles and practices. The building of institutional capacity and a social and legal framework is an important foundation for the development process. Education and public health are important priorities of the moment in the building of the social infrastructure. But the public sector also needs to contribute to promoting enterprise development and production facilities. Africa needs help in all of these areas, help which should be provided in a way that is tailored to African needs and the African cultural environment.

We are greatly encouraged by the determination manifested by the African Union to make its own arrangements for monitoring governance issues and to be engaged in the conflict resolution and the promotion of peace and stability. Of special importance is the evolution of regional mechanisms, under the aegis of the African Union, with respect to conflict prevention and reduction. We also look forward to the establishment of a pan-African parliament to promote development and integration and to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

With regard to the role of the United Nations, we can see that there is movement towards collaboration within the system. The coordination of the various agencies is now being oriented towards achieving NEPAD's priorities and working with the appropriate African regional and subregional organizations. We welcome the establishment within the Secretariat of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, which is playing a strategic role in this effort. We can only hope that this coordination does not become so overloaded with bureaucracy that it stifles creative efforts and the implementation of development projects. What we want to see are concrete results flowing from organizational improvements in the system.

I mentioned earlier the importance of building productive capacity. In this age of globalization, competitiveness and efficiency are of paramount importance. There is obviously a need to work closely with civil society to strengthen the private sector and to ensure that African entrepreneurship and indigenous capability are encouraged and developed to take advantage of economic opportunities in the global system. These are things that cannot be left to chance and that requires special attention on the part of the directing agencies of each country, working in cooperation with bilateral and multilateral agencies.

The international community should be careful to avoid the imposition on Africa of economic models and development policies that bear no relations to a country's social, political and economic realities. If doctrinaire prescriptions are applied or are required by international cooperation, it will not help Africa. We therefore continue to stress African ownership of NEPAD and African priorities as defined by Africans themselves. The role of the international community is a supportive one. That spirit of partnership and solidarity should be driven by a sense of responsibility to lend support and not to dictate what is to be done.

The people of the Caribbean Community have a special linkage and kinship with Africa, and we fully support the provision of substantial international support for Africa. As indicated by the representative of Guyana this morning, we are making our own modest contribution, particularly in the area of capacity-building, and we intend to explore all avenues to give concrete support to African development initiatives.

It is not necessary at this time to stir up the passions of historical grievance, but we should remember that Africa has suffered from plunder and exploitation. NEPAD provides the framework and also the opportunity for redressing the balance and for reversing the neglect of previous decades. We look forward to making this the beginning of a brighter future.

Mr. Dangue Réwaka (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): A little more than a year ago, in this very Hall, the General Assembly held a debate devoted to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). During that important meeting, heads of State or Government of the African countries came to ask for the international community's support in implementing the Partnership, on which the future of Africa henceforth would lie.

We are here today to take stock of the progress we have attained in the implementation of NEPAD. Agenda item 39 (a), which we are now considering, was conceived with this in mind. We welcome the first report of the Secretary-General reviewing the actions that have been undertaken at the national, regional and global level to contribute to the implementation of this major partnership. The report (A/58/254) constitutes beyond doubt a reference tool on the basis of which we must shape our future cooperation, cooperation which must be marked by solidarity and complementarity.

In Africa, NEPAD will henceforth be an integral part of national development strategies, thanks in particular to the establishment in most of our countries of focal points. Unfortunately, however, their disparate and diverse character dilutes the collective momentum to which the Partnership gave rise in the continent. Could not the United Nations help us to elaborate a standard focal point to be used as a reference and which would help us truly integrate NEPAD into our national development policies? That would enable all our countries to speak the same language and to use the

same indicators in the process of implementing NEPAD.

To the problem of the diversity of focal points we add another one: the multi-sectoral dimension of NEPAD. Instead of dispersing our efforts over all sectors, it would be wise for us to target two or three that have a comprehensive impact. With that in mind, hunger, malnutrition and the pandemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which today are the main obstacles to the development of Africa, must constitute the leitmotif of our concerns.

Resolution 57/297 rightly emphasized the need for including the industrialization of Africa in this first report on the implementation of NEPAD. It is more important than ever that the industrialization of Africa be directed towards the resolution of certain major issues, such as the fight against HIV/AIDS and the strengthening of the health and food systems of our countries.

We would like, finally, to welcome all the initiatives taken at both the bilateral and multilateral levels to mobilize new resources for NEPAD. I am thinking in particular of the pledges made by the European Union and the United States of America to devote respectively 150 million euros and $15 billion to the campaign against HIV/AIDS in Africa. We encourage them to further intensify their efforts of solidarity with Africa, where poverty, war and disease have become the daily fate of the people of the continent.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.